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Southeast Texas Medical Associates, LLP (SETMA)
recognized as a
National Model of Innovative Primary Care Practice
By Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Your Life Your Health
The Examiner
May 30, 2013

Beaumont, Texas – SETMA is among 30 clinics nationwide selected as an Exemplar Primary Care Practice by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Group Health Research Institute, who have teamed up on a new initiative to identify practice innovations that make primary care more efficient, effective, and satisfying to patients and providers. *The Primary Care Team: Learning from Effective Ambulatory Practices (LEAP)* project identifies primary care practices that have focused on teamwork and new roles for health professionals in ways that support consistently outstanding primary care. SETMA was selected through a rigorous national process to receive the designation.

SETMA has been acknowledged by many organizations for the use of electronic patient records to improve care and for excellence of care. Since 1998, SETMA has been expanding the use of electronics in improving patient care resulting in SETMA receiving the HIMSS Davies Award in 2005, National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Patient-Centered Medical Home recognition and Diabetes Recognition in 2010, Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care accreditation for Medical Home and Ambulatory Care in 2010, formal Affiliation with the Joslin Diabetes Center affiliated with Harvard School of Medicine, and many other

Since its founding in 1995, SETMA has focused on processes, believing that outcomes will inevitably follow, which outcomes will the inevitably be sustainable.

The goal of the *LEAP* project is to identify and share innovative staffing arrangements that make primary care more accessible and effective for patients. In October, 2012, A *LEAP* team conducted a three-day site visit to understand how the SETMA primary care team delivers high quality, patient-centered health care. The exemplar practices will then join together in a learning community to share best practices and distill their innovations into training and technical assistance materials that can be used by others.

SETMA will be influential in developing creative workforce models that will be disseminated to primary care practices nationwide. SETMA's integrated approach to primary care is organized

as a set of teams formed into one team. Using the same EMR in the clinic, emergency department, hospital, physical therapy, nursing home – every where SETMA patients are seen – SETMA has improved the continuity of care, the safety of care and has decreased the cost of care. In 2011, RTI International was commissioned by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) to contrast 312 Medical Home Practices with 312 non-coordinated practices. SETMA results demonstrated a 37.4 decrease in the total, annual cost of the care of fee-for-service Medicare recipients over other practices, while maintaining superior quality and coordination.

Because many of SETMA's patients have limited resources, the SETMA partners inaugurated the SETMA Foundation to which they have personally given over \$2,000,000 in the past four years. This money cannot profit or benefit SETMA or SETMA employees but is used to care for SETMA patients who cannot afford their care. Foundational funding has been the difference in the health and recovery of many of SETMA's patients. Other healthcare providers in Southeast Texas have either donated their services to these patients or have significantly reduced their fees to enable these neighbors to get critically needed healthcare.

“With millions of Americans about to enter the health care system, primary care must become more effective and efficient. Building high performing care teams is a key step,” said Ed Wagner, MD, MPH, co-director of the *LEAP* project and director emeritus of the MacColl Center for Health Care Innovation at Group Health Research Institute in Seattle. “This new project will allow us to identify best practices and help other primary care sites replicate and adopt innovations to improve access to care and the quality of care they provide.”

“Now more than ever, the country recognizes that a great health care system has to build on a strong primary care foundation. We are seeing innovation all over the country, particularly in the area of primary care but there has been little study of how practices have redefined traditional roles and developed a team approach to caring for patients,” commented Margaret Flinter, PhD, APRN, *LEAP* project co-director and senior vice president and clinical director of the Community Health Center, Inc. and director of its Weitzman Center for Innovation. “We are very excited to have the opportunity to study these innovations that improve patient and practice outcomes and share them so they can be replicated.”

About the MacColl Center for Health Care Innovation at Group Health Research Institute
Named for a Group Health founder and pioneering physician, W.A. MacColl, MD, the MacColl Center for Health Care Innovation at Group Health Research Institute (GHRI) was established in 1992 by Ed Wagner, MD, MPH, who is a senior investigator and founding director of GHRI. In the mid-1990s, the Center developed the Chronic Care Model, a widely endorsed and adopted approach to improving ambulatory care that has guided clinical quality initiatives in the United States and internationally. The Center was also the home of Improving Chronic Illness Care, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program that has been involved in further developing, testing, and disseminating Chronic Care Model-based clinical improvement efforts. To learn more about this work, visit www.improvingchroniccare.org. For information on Group Health Research Institute, go to www.grouphealthresearch.org.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, measurable, and timely change. For more than 40 years, the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.